



Images 1 and 2:

Author: Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva

Title: **Butterflies in the Stomach** (detail)

Year: 2008

Venue: L'H du Siège, Valenciennes, France

Material: Preserved caul fat, plastic

Dimension: 250 square metres

Photo: Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva © the artist

Courtesy: the artist

Butterflies in the Stomach was developed during a 3 month residency at L'H du Siege, contemporary gallery in Northern France. The installation took visitors on a journey through an intricate and beautiful 250 square metre labyrinth of caul fat. Suspended sheets of this stretched and fragile material drew people inside; undulating and touching their bodies as they moved through the space, and emanating a fresh (sausage-like) odour.

Elpida's ongoing interest in the special or unique features of a place, led her to explore the region's traditional lace making practices. Spending time with the ladies of the 'Dentelle de Valenciennes', she borrowed, re-worked and repeated their designs through drawings. A fascination with local food specialties – especially the butcher's window – introduced the surprising cohabitant: offal.

The intricate and slow production of lace making resonates with Elpida's own practice, where laborious and skillful work is central to every sculpture. The use of unexpected often unpleasant materials - such as offal - is also a common thread. It is a device that encourages a sense of experimentation, a challenge to the orthodox and, strangely, a celebration of craft.

Butterflies in the Stomach intended to make the hidden visible and encourage a sensitive appreciation of place. It acknowledged the attributes of skill and craft, which are less appreciated in the fast food, mass-produced, consumer-focused society of the 21st Century.

<http://elpihv.co.uk/works/butterflies>



Image 3:

Author: Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva

Title: Bad Hair Day

Year: 2008

Venue: L'H du Siège, Valenciennes, France

Material: Preserved omasum and metal

Dimension: 52 cm x 50 cm x 50 cm

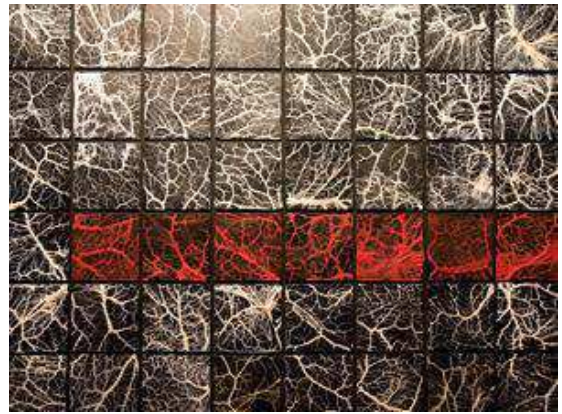
Photo: Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva © the artist

Courtesy: the artist

Bad Hair Day, Milking and To Drape were produced at L'H du Siège in Valenciennes, France, where Elpida was an artist in residence from October 2007 to January 2008.

Each work was made out of an individual cow stomach. Cows have four stomachs, and these ones were carefully sourced, cleaned, preserved and stitched together into grotesque yet intricate forms.

<http://elpihv.co.uk/archive/bad-hair-day>



Images 4 and 5:

Author: Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva

Title: Inherent Beauty

Year: 2010

Venue: Public Room, Skopje, Macedonia

Material: Preserved call fat, black mdf tiles

Dimension: 600 tiles of 20 cm x 20 cm

Photo: Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva © the artist

Courtesy: the artist

Inherent Beauty is installation commissioned by Public Room Promo Center, Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, 2010

Caul Fat (pig stomach), mdf tiles 2 sections of 350 cm x 315 cm full installation 656 cm x 315 cm x 300 cm
Our skin reflects our age and our ancestry, our state of health and our cultural identity; it communicates much of what the world knows about us. Skin is visually perceived to provide involuntary insights into hidden things. It is a multilayered, multipurpose organ that shifts from thick to thin, tight to loose, wet to dry, across the landscape of the body. Lacking definitive boundaries, skin flows continuously from the exposed surfaces of the body to its hidden cavities and organs.

“**Inherent Beauty** pleads towards a specific visual beauty whose essence is creation of something beautiful through ugliness, if we may so crudely determine this discourse. It is a new geography of art both literally and by implication. The objective roughness, bluntness and ugliness of the medium that Hadzi-Vasileva uses (e.g., membranes from a pig’s stomach) are reformed Nature, metamorphosed through the artist’s skilled hand and into an artwork that gains new subjectivity and therefore narrative which has both a general and individual thought stimulations. The visual sensation of her concept (membranes of pig stomachs fixed onto a black base in a square frame, like miniatures, measuring 20cm x 20cm, and as such mathematically arranged into a synchronized system that is positioned on a wall, thus brings up associations of tapestry) lies in the multiple monochromatic mimesis of the spectacle, which changes from square to square, with an accent on texture as a dominant element and at the same time creating a rhythmically visual dynamic. Every square has its own different poetry, its own stamp, existence and pulse.”

<http://elpihv.co.uk/archive/inherent-beauty>



Images 6 and 7:

Author: Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva

Title: Reoccurring Undulation (detail)

Year: 2011

Venue: Towner, The Contemporary Art Museum, Eastbourne, England

Material: Preserved salmon skins on zinc plated tiles

Dimension: 960 tiles of 20 cm x 20 cm

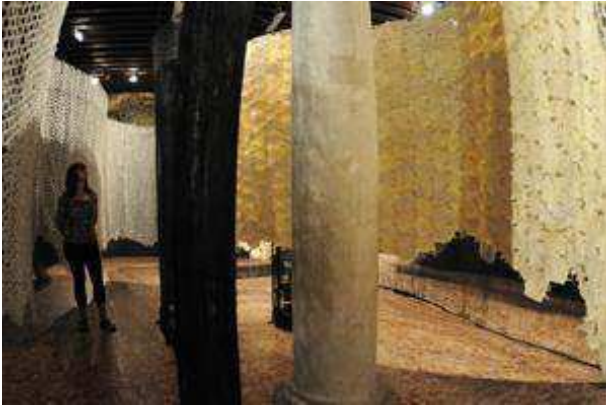
Photo: Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva © the artist

Courtesy: the artist

Reoccurring Undulation was a temporary commission for Towner, the contemporary art museum in Eastbourne, as part of *Compulsive, Obsessive, Repetitive* (2011). The work was made out of 960 salmon skin tiles arranged to form an intriguing and dynamic pattern, suggestive of landscape. It covered the wall, floor to ceiling, like a tapestry.

The material was selected through a process of engagement with the locality, its landscape and history. What lies beneath and inside the material world of membranes and skins, are recurring obsessions in Elpida's work. She is interested in taking dead waste materials and transforming them through repetition into new artefacts that show us the latent beauty of this discarded matter. Elpida often endures weeks/months of repetitive and nauseating labour to create her work. It is precisely this repetition that creates an imaginative space, opens up possibilities and allows the work to evolve.

<http://elpihv.co.uk/works/reoccurring-undulation>



Images 8 and 9:

Author: Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva

Title: Silentio Pathologia

Year: 2013

Venue: Scuola dei Laneri, Republic of Macedonia Pavilion, 55th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia

Material: Steel, silk, silk worm cocoons, rat skins, live rats, bespoke cages, cotton and wire

Dimension: 1600 cm x 1000 cm x 300 cm

Photo: Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva © the artist

Courtesy: the artist

Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva presents a major new installation work, **Silentio Pathologia**, at the **Scuola dei Laneri**, commissioned by the National Gallery of Macedonia, working with curator **Ana Frangovska** for the 55th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia.

Silentio Pathologia draws upon her original proposal to the Ministry of Culture of Macedonia, which reflected upon the movement, migration and impact of medieval plagues through Europe (and city states such as Venice) and considers contemporary concerns about international migratory illnesses such as coronavirus. This ambitious work includes woven silk, silkworm cocoons, rat skins and curtains of steel sheet installed in a Venetian palazzo. Drawing upon her established and highly regarded practice of extended periods of working and embellishing multiple objects into large-scale art installations; this is a signature artwork for the 55th international Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia.

About the use of rats in Silentio Pathologia:

The rats from which the skins in Elpida's exhibition came, were sourced from animal feed suppliers and usually form part of the diet of large carnivorous birds and mammals, reptiles and snakes kept in captivity. Elpida's use of these skins is intended to highlight the continuing market in animals, their skins and other products around the world, and reflects Elpida's use of original materials in her art works, however distasteful. By presenting the real to audiences as part of a constructed art work, people are confronted with the unvarnished truth about animals, markets and commodification of animal products.

The live rats in the exhibition are sourced from an Italian pet supplier and have been trained as pets, they are handled daily, and are looked after as recommended by rat husbandry experts.

All of Elpida's works are made reflecting the places and locations where the work is made and/or displayed and to a large degree she makes use of discarded or recycled materials. She has never initiated or commissioned, and never intends to, harm any animal.

<http://elpihv.co.uk/works/silentio-pathologia>



Image 10:

Author: Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva

Title: *Witness of Virility* (detail)

Year: 2011

Venue: Pied à Terre, London, UK

Material: Preserved sheep testicle

Dimension: 15cm x 7 cm x 5 cm

Photo: Sean Gibson © the artist

Courtesy: the artist

Elpida was the first Artist-in-Restaurant at Pied à Terre, Michelin-starred restaurant in London and **Witness of Virility** was part of her solo exhibition *'The Wish of the Witness'*, at the culmination of the 8 month residency (2011).

The installation was made out of eighty sheep's testicles, sourced from the restaurant's kitchen, that have been preserved and sculpted into beautiful 'light bulbs'. This and the other works in the exhibition, sought to position themselves between the beautiful and the brutal; 'recomposing decomposition' into beautiful forms. *The Wish of the Witness* follows a period of in-depth research by the artist, in close collaboration with the chefs, and is influenced by the restaurant's daily routines and menus.

<http://elpihv.co.uk/works/witness-of-virility>